



News From

Maggie Brooks

Monroe County Executive

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BROOKS, COUNTY OFFICIALS ANNOUNCE GPS MONITORING PROGRAM FOR SEX OFFENDERS

County Executive Maggie Brooks today announced that Monroe County is making GPS technology available that will enable officials to monitor high-risk sex offenders in our community. Brooks, who was joined by Sheriff Patrick O'Flynn, Majority Leader Bill Smith and Republican members of the Monroe County Legislature, called the initiative "an important step forward in the effort to keep the community safe from sex offenders."

"This is an important step forward in the effort to keep the community safe from sex offenders," said Brooks. "The bottom line is that GPS technology will enable us to keep a closer watch on sex offenders and help keep them away from places where children congregate."

Under the County's Sex Offender GPS Monitoring Program, Monroe County will request sentencing judges to require high-risk sex offenders on probation to wear a GPS tracking device. The device, which is fixed to the offender's ankle, enables probation officials and law enforcement agencies to identify a sex offender's exact location (within approximately 15 feet) at any time of the day or night.

The County's GPS monitoring system will be pre-programmed to send out an alert to law enforcement agencies if a sex offender wearing the device enters restricted areas such as schools, parks, or museums. The system will also send out an alert if an offender tampers with or tries to remove the device.

Bill Smith, Majority Leader of the Monroe County Legislature, noted that a recently passed Senate bill would make GPS monitoring mandatory for all high-risk sex offenders. Responding to recent reports that Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver is blocking the Senate's tougher approach to sex offenders, Smith called on the Assembly's Democrat majority to do the right thing and approve the Senate's tougher monitoring standards for sex offenders.

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“A comprehensive state law that makes GPS monitoring of sex offenders mandatory is the best possible approach,” said Smith, adding that the County GPS monitoring program will allow local officials to begin monitoring sex offenders right away. “We just can’t afford to wait for Speaker Silver to get his act together,” said Smith. “Our first priority is to get a program in place to keep Monroe County families safe from sexual predators.”

Sheriff Patrick O’Flynn described the County’s GPS monitoring program as a useful tool for law enforcement agencies. “By using GPS technology, local law enforcement agencies will be able to respond more quickly when a sex offender violates the terms of their probation,” said O’Flynn, “This program will enable us to verify a sex offender’s specific location and make it easier to enforce the community notification requirements under Megan’s law.”

State Penal Law allows a judge to impose any probation condition that is “necessary or appropriate to ameliorate the conduct which gave rise to the offence.” Monroe County already offers judges 32 additional restrictive probation conditions on sex offenders,” noted Brooks. “GPS monitoring is just another tool to help officials make certain that sex offenders are abiding by the conditions of their probation.”

Under current state guidelines, electronic monitoring of offenders is allowed as a condition of probation, but monitoring is limited to six months in duration with allowances for an additional six-month extension. Brooks announced that, unless the state acts to require GPS monitoring of sex offenders, Monroe County will seek a waiver from the New York State Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives that would enable the County to continue its program beyond current limits.

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